THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALIASHRAF FATMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The State Ministers of Higher and Technical Education, in the Conference held at Bangalore on January 10-11, 2005, arrived at a broad consensus on the need for Central Legislation in this regard. A draft Bill has been prepared for vetting by the concerned Departments and subsequent circulation among stakeholders and all the State Governments to elicit their views for regulation of admission and fixation of fee.

(d) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has received a request from the State Government of Kerala for inclusion of Kerala self-financing Professional Colleges (Prohibition of Capitation Fees and Procedure for Admission and Fixation of Fees) Act, 2004 in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India. A Central legislation in this matter is under consideration. Therefore, no steps have been initiated for considering the inclusion of Kerala self-financing Professional College Act, in the Ninth Schedule.

Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme

694. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the European Union has decided to accord top priority to the Indian students in the Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme with an allocation of over Euros 230 million in five years;

(b) whether the initial allocation for India stands at Euros 33 million for a period extending upto 2007; and

(c) whether Government nave evolved any guidelines for sponsorship of the students to Erasmus Mundus Programmes and if so whether SC/ST and Economically backward categories would be accorded priority?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) The Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme has been formulated by European Union with a view to promoting higher educational co-operation between the EU and remaining countries of the world. The European Union have offered a separate Erasmus Mundus India Window Programme involving Euro 33 million for Indian students. This amount would be available to be utilized

till 31st December, 2009. It is expected to provide about 900 scholarships for Indian students to pursue Erasmus Mundus Masters' courses at selected Consortia of Universities, EU Authorities have already advertised the offer of scholarships for selection of candidates from India for the year 2005-06.

(c) As per the document signed with European Union, Indian students including SC/ST and economically backward categories will apply for scholarships in their individual capacity directly to the Consortium of Universities for respective Erasmus Mundus Master Course for study. This Consortium of Universities implementing Erasmus Mundus course will have to follow the norms, procedure and criteria evolved and approved by European Union for selection, placement of students and award of degrees. Students would be selected on merit and verification of academic credentials.

Sanskrit as compulsory subject in Kendriya Vidyalayas

695. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sanskrit is taught as a compulsory subject in Kendriya Vidyalayas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would consider teaching other Indian Languages as well with a view to promote national integration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALIASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) Sanskrit is taught in Kendriya Vidyalayas as one of the compulsory subjects from Classes VI to VIII. In Classes IX and X where students have to study two languages, they have the option to take Sanskrit as one of the languages. Sanskrit can also be taken as additional subject in these classes. As per the existing provisions of the KVS, the students of Classes XI and XII can opt from Sanskrit either as a compulsory language subject or as an elective subject. The work of teaching Sanskrit in Classes IX to XII is entrusted to part-time/contractual teachers provided the number of students exercising the option to learn Sanskrit is 20 or more in a Class.

(c) There is already a provision for students of KVS to opt for regional language/mother tongue in Classes VI to VIII. Arrangement for part-time